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CONDITIONS.

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THE
CHRISTIAN MAGAZINE.

VOL. II.

JULY, 1825.

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MEMOIR OF THE
REV. JOSEPHUS WHEATON

It is now several months since the lamented death of the Rev. JOSEPHUS WHEATON of Holliston.— A number of short notices of him, has, in the interval, been given to the public. If the present memoir comes too late for the purposes of sympathy ; it may come in a more proper season for extended and practical reflections.

Josephus Wheaton, son of Joseph Wheaton, Esq. was born at Rehoboth, Mass. on the 16th of March 1788. It will be interesting to his acquaintance, and may be useful to those of tender years, to know, that the same amiable disposition which endeared him to his friends in riper years, was manifested by him when a child. His peaceable, condescending and kind behaviour toward his brother and sisters made him their delight. He was obedient to his parents ; and, as his father relates of him, " never needed to be spoken to a second time." In this respect, he early imitated the example of his Savior, respecting

whom, little is written of his first years to gratify the learned ;— yet it is particularly recorded that he was subject to his parents.— While a child, Josephus was sober minded. And although not religious ; yet he seems to have been free from the vices and follies incident to that period of life. This was probably owing to religious instruction, seasonably and faithfully imparted ; which before it was the means of his conversion operated as a strong moral restraint.

Until about the age of seventeen, his opportunities of education were confined within the limits of our common winter schools. At this time, the native energy of his character and his thirst for knowledge, began to open his way to the means of obtaining a more finished education. By his own ingenuity and perseverance, he obtained a trade, the avails of which were destined by Providence, to prepare him for his future usefulness in a profession, where it may be said of him, that *his feet were shod* with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

He entered Brown University, a year in advance, in 1809. Here he prosecuted his studies with ardour, diligence and success. The regularity of his conduct won the esteem both of the officers and students of the University. He was graduated in Sept. 1812, one of the best scholars of his class ; among whom was Kingsbury, the able and devoted missionary to the Indians, the roommate and endeared friend of the subject of this memoir. There they emulated each other's industry and attainments ; they united in the morning and evening sacrifice, " took sweet counsel together and walked to the house of God in company." Wheaton is removed from his earthly labours ; Kingsbury stays to tread the wilderness, and lead the wandering Indian to the blessings of civilization and christianity. It will be inferred from this that Mr. Wheaton was religious while at College. He entertained a hope of reconciliation to God, before his entrance into College ; but whether the hope was well or ill founded, he with that self-distrust, which was always peculiar to him, abandoned it. Near the close of his collegiate course, his mind was refreshed with peace in believing ; and if this was not the time of his conversion, it was evidently of deepened seriousness, and more unreserved dedication of himself to God. He then united himself, by solemn covenant, with the visible church.

In respect to the choice of a profession, he formed different designs and expectations at different periods of his preparatory and collegiate education. His first view was to the law, and for a considerable time, his habits of mind were forming under the influence of that expectation. But for what particular reason, it is not understood, he became afterwards inclined to the profession of medicine, and he attended the various lectures of that department, under the expectation, that he was preparing for the business of his life. When, however, his christian hope permitted him to turn his attention to the ministry, he abandoned all other prospects of life, and determined to consecrate all his powers and acquisitions to the work of preaching the gospel.— His changes of purpose will not be imputed, by those who knew him, to any instability of character. They have been mentioned, under the conviction, that they were, in this case, and have been in others, *providential*, and well calculated to enlarge the sphere of ministerial usefulness.

After leaving the University, Mr. Wheaton was engaged as Preceptor in George Street Academy, in Providence ; but was soon invited to a tutorship in the University. Here, as might have been expected, he discharged with eminent ability and faithfulness, the duties of an office, for which he was admirably fitted ; and he had the happiness, at the same time,

to benefit and please the students under his tuition and government. He was a tutor more than two years ; during which time, he was not merely gratifying his high relish for classical learning ; but was devoting what time his office would allow to the study of divinity.

Previously to his resigning his office in the College, he was licensed to preach ; and was invited to supply the desk at Holliston, the town in which he was afterwards ordained and settled.— His ordination was on the 6th of Dec. 1815. He now entered zealously into the duties of the ministry ; and performed those duties with great credit to himself, and it is believed, with lasting advantage to his people.

The labors of a christian minister, whose main concern is to feed the church over which he is made an overseer, are not of a kind, to afford interest by a particular detail. Rev. Mr. Wheaton laboured faithfully to promote what he considered the best interests of his people. He cared for souls as one that must give an account. He was anxious for the enlargement of his church, and very anxious, that all who named the name of Christ should depart from iniquity. He used to lament that no special revival of religion was experienced among his people ; and would express fears that it was owing to his unfaithfulness. Others however may justly say of him, what his characteristic humil-

ity did not suffer him to say of himself. He, in truth, sought fervently the welfare of Zion and the good of souls. But he feared being deceived himself as to the foundation of his religious hopes ; and he feared lest others should be deceived. This made him a close and distinguishing preacher ; by which I mean, that he incessantly laboured, in his preaching, not only to make persons religious ; but to make them trust in nothing, but those pure and disinterested affections, in which he conceived that true religion consisted.

In his intercourse with his people, his wisdom was evangelical ; first pure then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated. His conciliating deportment, amiable temper, and dignified, yet unaffected manners won the affections of those who were not always pleased with his theological sentiments.— Among that highly respectable people, there had been unhappy divisions previously to Mr. Wheaton's coming among them. The unanimity which attended his call to be their pastor, and teacher, was under such circumstances considered remarkable ; and Mr. Wheaton continued to hold and to increase their respect and affection.

A spirit of improvement, in general, he seemed desirous of promoting. Hence his solicitude for the prosperity of schools and his encouragement of every laudable undertaking among his people.

But he was all the time a student as well as a pastor. What time the more active duties of his office would permit, he was with his book and his pen. His dear companion who bewails his death, bears witness to his diligence; and observe that scarcely a day past, without hearing from him some lamentation, that he had not better improved his time. He usually read with system; and embraced in that system nothing which he did not deem subordinate and conducive to his usefulness as a servant of Christ. His desire for learning was indulged rather from motives of duty, than of variety. He was, indeed, made to be not only a minister but a literary man, such was the character of the talents with which God had endowed him; such had been the effect of the circumstances into which divine Providence had cast him. But his object was learning sanctified and devoted to increase the glory of God and the good of men, he meant to make the wisdom of the Egyptians subservient to the interest of the people of God.

He excelled in an intimate acquaintance with the classics. His literary character, and eminent talents as an instructor of youth, made his house a favorite resort of young men fitting for College, or perfecting their education. Among the plans which quickened his industry, was a book which he was well qualified to compose on the subject of school education; the

topicks and chapters of which remain as a memento of his useful designs.

He was extensively acquainted with the authors who have written on mental philosophy and moral science. He had so great a taste for these subjects, and had read so extensively in reference to them, that he sometimes ventured to contemplate a publication, not intended as an original work, but which should embody the best views on these important subjects.

As a preacher Mr. Wheaton was what he principally aimed to be, *instructive*. He considered truth to be the ordinary instrument of sanctifying and saving men; and that the chief object of a preacher should be, to inculcate truth, in humble dependance on a higher power to give it a saving energy.

Yet he was also an animated and animating preacher. His whole soul appeared in his work; and his pulpit exertions were even too fatiguing for an ordinary constitution to support.

He was always instructive and animated, and sometimes powerful. To be eloquent, was not his object, yet he was occasionally eloquent to a very high degree.— That part of his discourse on the equality of mankind, which relates to *slavery* shews no less the pen of a master than the heart of a christian philanthropist; and needs only the authority of a *name* to spread it in other climes and countries. But it was his maxim, that the world generally do justice

to merit, and that every man finds his proper place and standing.— He was unobtrusive on the world for fame, and no fortunate circumstances brought his merits extensively before the public.

His *style* will bear just encomium. Language in the most extensive use of the word, was a subject with which Mr. Wheaton was familiar. Few, even among the learned had so quick and clear a perception of the different shades of meaning, of different words, or were able to choose words with such uniform propriety. He well understood what Melmoth calls the “numerous composition” and had an ear for a harmonious period. In a word, his style was worthy of the man who wrote, and, of the important subjects on which it was employed. He seemed to think with Addison that good thoughts ought to be well dressed. He had, also the authority of a wiser man; who “because he was wise, sought to find out acceptable words,” and considered “words fitly spoken to be like apples of gold in pictures of silver.”

But it may, however, be acknowledged, without depreciating his attainments or usefulness, that his intimacy with learning, led him unconsciously at times to a literary phraseology, which though it was intelligible, yet did not come home so well to the minds of men—as if he had always spoken in a style more akin to their modes of conception. His intention was, to be

perspicuous, and he was generally successful.

As it respects the delivery of his discourses, it was natural, and the animation of which we have already spoken, united with the rich materials of his sermons, made him a highly acceptable speaker. Yet “the start theatric,” &c. he had never practiced. And perhaps it may be said of him as of most preachers in this part of our country; that he did not pay proportionate attention to the delivery of his compositions. Since I have assumed to act the part of the critic I will take the freedom to observe what perhaps was less noticed by his ordinary hearers; that he spoke too fast. His own quick apprehension and warm temperament led him to a delivery of his discourses, which was too rapid to permit every auditor fully to apprehend, all the thoughts with which his sermons abounded.—this defect, his benevolence, would undoubtedly dispose him to permit to be mentioned, if it might guard others against a fault, which is not unfrequent. It is certainly matter of regret, that after a preacher has with anxious and laborious study, collected valuable materials for his discourse, he should deliver his thoughts so rapidly, that if much is understood, still much must be lost by the hearer. This defect however has been more remarkable in thousands of others, than in Mr. Wheaton; and is the more to be regretted in this in-

tance, as it made his preaching so much more wearing to his constitution and may have been somewhat instrumental in cutting short his valuable life.

His faithful preparations for the pulpit ought not to be left unnoticed. He carried beaten oil into the sanctuary, and seemed unwilling to offer to God an offering of that which cost him nothing. Few ministers of his age, could, perhaps shew such proofs of their care and industry, by the number and condition of their manuscripts.

He extemporised occasionally; and although he usually did this when time permitted him only a hasty preparation; yet the quickness of his conceptions, the ardor of his feelings, and his well furnished and well disciplined mind, made his performances on such occasions very creditable to his talents and useful to his hearers. There appeared indeed on these occasions *more* nature and power in his delivery and unusually striking illustrations and expressions. Had he purposed to have become an extemporaneous preacher, and thus have devoted as much time to his extemporary, as to his written discourses, he might have increased his usefulness, by adding this to his other attainments.

It was delightful to listen to, and join in his prayers. Not only was there extensive compass, and happy pertinence of thought, and and great ease and fluency of expression; but a charming sincerity and fervor of devotion, which an-

imated christians, reproved the lukewarm, and denoted him to be a man of prayer in private as well as in public.

His *piety* was ardent; and humility was well known by his acquaintance to be a distinguishing feature of it. His trials in respect to his own piety, though not without example, were peculiarly severe and at times caused painful sensations in his friends who had so much confidence, that he possessed religion, and wished that he might go on his way rejoicing.-- But his sun was not always overcast; he hoped in God; resigned himself with confidence to his disposal; and often had joy and peace in believing. Mr. Wheaton was a valuable and interesting *friend*; as well as an affectionate and kind husband and parent.— While his family and relatives, his church and people call justly for the tenderest sympathies, his brethren in the ministry with whom he was most intimately associated, mourn that they must see his face no more. They always received from him a cordial welcome, and felt it a great privilege to enjoy his conversation and counsel. They saw in him a mind of the first order, both for the acquisition and the retention of knowledge; they witnessed his constant application and rapid growth in knowledge and grace and predicted his eminence and increased usefulness to the church and the world. He still lives in their affections. May the example of his diligence and piety

animate them to increase in diligence; and more entire devotion to the cause of the Redeemer.— His health was declining for nearly three years before his death. His disease was obstinate and peculiar; not only causing a frequent alternation of hope and fear in him, but in his friends also. It appeared peculiarly trying to be the subject of a disease, of so doubtful a nature and issue. The variation of the prospect presented to him, now of life and a protraction of his duties and labors, now of death and an end of all earthly pursuits—caused the trial to be in his case, constantly repeated; and it seemed as if divine Providence intended to try his resignation by the severest test, and make him an example to others of patience and submission. But let pious but humble christians know that this man of God, was not in his last sickness, at all times delivered from every fear, but, as might have been expected of him, he was always patient, usually serene, and sometimes even joyful. As those will witness who were present, when the communion, was administered to him at his house. Then it seemed as if unusual strength was given him; so that he sung through an hymn of some length, and greatly enjoyed the divine ordinance. Though shut out from the natural light, as he was, entirely, for months during the last of his sickness; the “heavenly light at times shown inward,” an antepast as we

trust to an unclouded and perennial day.

This servant of the Lord expired Feb. 4th 1825 having not yet completed his 37th year.

He was interred on the 10th, and an appropriate discourse, containing a concise but just and affectionate notice of his character, was delivered by Rev. Mr. Ide of Medway from the 77th Psalm 19th verse. “Thy way is in the sea, thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.”

SERMON No. XII.

MARK, IX. 40.—*For he that is not against us, is on our part.*

It is very easy to distinguish the rich from the poor, the learned from the unlearned, the moral from the immoral; but it is not so easy to distinguish the gracious from the graceless. This most important of all distinctions is the most difficult to ascertain. The disciples of Christ were unable to determine, who were his real friends, in distinction from his real enemies. They often formed wrong opinions concerning the religious characters of men. They took one of their own number to be a cordial friend to Christ, who afterwards turned out to be his mortal enemy; and they took another man to be his enemy, whom he declared to be his friend.— This they were constrained to acknowledge. Christ having illustrated the character of a true dis-

ciple, they acquaint him of their opinion of a certain man, whom they found casting out devils.—“And John answered him saying, Master; we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us; and we forbade him because he followeth not us. But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle in my name that can lightly speak evil of me. *For he that is not against us, is on our part.*—“As if he had said, he that is not unfriendly to me is friendly; and he that is friendly to me in the least degree, is a real friend or one of my true disciples: because there is no medium between love and hatred, grace and sin.” Hence the spirit of the text warrants us to say,

That the least degree of grace constitutes a real saint. *I shall show,*

I. What is meant by grace.

II. That the least degree of it constitutes a real saint. And,

III. Why it does this.

I. Let us consider what is to be understood by grace.

By this word we commonly mean to express some holy exercise of heart; and when we say any person is in the exercise of grace, we mean that he is in the exercise of some holy affection, which is peculiar to a good man. By grace in God, we mean that exercise of holiness or benevolence, which is called compassion or forgiveness to the guilty. But by grace in men, we mean every exercise of

pure benevolence or holy love.—The scripture more frequently speaks of the gracious exercises of God towards men, than their exercises of grace towards him and one another. But the term grace is very often used to signify the holy exercises of the renewed heart. In this sense Paul uses the word, when he exhorts christians “to sing to the Lord, with grace in their hearts.” And when he says, “Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt.” In another place he says, “Let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.” And again, “It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace.” The apostle Peter also exhorts christians “to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” In all these instances, the word *grace*, is evidently used to denote holy and devout exercises of heart. And from this use of the word in scripture, it has become common and familiar to call holy affections, the exercises of grace. Accordingly when I use the phrase, the least degree of grace, I mean the least or lowest, exercise of holy love or true benevolence, in which all holiness consists. I proceed,

II. To show that the least degree of grace constitutes a real saint. This will appear from various considerations.

1. The least degree of grace is represented as the fruit of the renewing or sanctifying influence

of the Holy Spirit. The least degree of divine love is represented as flowing from this cause. The apostle John says, "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God." And the apostle Paul says, "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." True faith also is said to be the fruit of the Spirit. The apostle John says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Agreeably to this Paul tells the believers at Corinth, "Ye are risen with him, (that is Christ,) through the faith of the operation of God." And receiving Christ, or what is the same thing believing in him, is represented in the same light in the first chapter of John. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name, which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." The first and lowest degree of grace is ascribed to the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit, by Christ in the third chapter of this gospel. "That which is born of the spirit is spirit." That is, every holy or spiritual affection is the effect of the regenerating influence of the divine spirit. And in perfect consistency with this, we are told, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, faith, meekness." Now if every degree of grace, if every

holy and virtuous affection be the fruit of regenerating or sanctifying influences of the spirit of God; then the least degree of grace must constitute a real saint. For every one who is renewed and sanctified, or born of God, is a good man. This is an infallible criterion of a true believer. John says, "We know that whatsoever is born of God sinneth not." And again, "Whatsoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." Or in other words this is the essential difference between saints and sinners; saints are born of God, but sinners are not; saints have some grace, and sinners have none. The least spark of grace, therefore, forms a real saint.

2. Divine promises are made to the least degree of grace, which is another evidence, that the least degree of grace forms the christian character. If we look into the bible, we shall find gracious promises made to all gracious exercises. God declares, "I love them that love me, and those that seek me early shall find me." The apostle John says, "God is love: and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him." Christ says, "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." And the apostle Paul asserts, "All things shall work to-

gether for good to them that love God." In all these passages, the promise of divine love and favor is made to love, and to love of the lowest degree. Accordingly, the apostle scruples not to say, "Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." The lowest degree of true, sincere love, entitles any person to all the promises of the gospel. Pardon is promised to repentance throughout the Old and New Testament. God promises to pardon every penitent, contrite, broken-hearted sinner. When the three thousand said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And the next day he said to a great many more under similar circumstances, "Repent ye therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Our Savior said to sinners, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." And he spake several parables to illustrate this truth, that the least degree of genuine repentance would entitle sinners to pardoning mercy. The parable of the publican was designed to teach us, that whosoever shall say in sincerity, "God be merciful to me a sinner," shall find mercy.-- And the parable of the prodigal

son was designed to teach the most worthless and ill-deserving sinners, that if they will sincerely say what the prodigal did, they shall be pardoned and accepted.— Yea, "Thus saith the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity whose name is holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." The promise of salvation is every where and in every form, in the New Testament made to the exercise of faith. Christ said, "him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Christ said, "Whosoever should believe on him, should not come into condemnation, should not die—should not perish; but should have everlasting life." And he gave it in commission to all his apostles and ministers, to preach the gospel to every creature in these words, "He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Thus the lowest degree of love, or repentance, or faith, entitles men to the favor and enjoyment of God. This doctrine Christ more fully and emphatically taught in his sermon on the mount, in which he said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God. Just before his crucifixion, Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come and drink." And after his ascension to heaven, he commanded it to be written. "The spirit and the bride say, come: let him that heareth say, come: let him that is athirst come: and whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely." According to these declarations of scripture, the lowest degree of hungering, thirsting, and desiring, entitles any one to pardon and salvation. But we know that all promises are in Christ, yea, and amen. God promises no good to sinners, as such; and therefore all to whom the promises of God apply, are christians, believers, or real saints. And since the lowest degree of grace secures the promise of eternal life: this implies that the least degree of grace forms the essential distinction between a saint and a sinner.

3. God promises to reward men for the least action done in a *gracious* manner; which implies that the least degree of grace will place men at the right hand of the Judge, at the last day. This our Savior suggests in connection with the text, and in order to illustrate the truth contained in it. Having said, "he that is not against us, is on our part," he immediately subjoins, "for whosoever shall give you a

cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you he shall not lose his reward." Such a small action done in gracious sincerity, or to express love to Christ shall meet a final and eternal reward. This sentiment Christ frequently inculcated. He says in the tenth of Matthew, "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me. He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward, and he that receiveth a righteous man in the name of a righteous man, shall receive a righteous man's reward." And in the twenty fifth chapter, where he describes the process of the great day, he represents the righteous as being rewarded for the smallest expressions of benevolence, even such as they could hardly recollect, "Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord when saw we an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink, &c. And the King shall answer, and say unto them. Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these my brethern, ye did it unto me." From this representation it appears, that the least action done in a gracious manner, shall be finally and forever rewarded.—But the persons of men must be accepted, before their actions can be accepted, or they must be pardoned, before they are rewarded. All, therefore, whose actions are

rewarded must be real saints.— The consequence is plain and undeniable, that the least degree of grace constitutes the christian character. If a man has the least love to Christ, or the least love to his friends, or does the least gracious act, he is a gracious man, and belongs to the number of Christ's true disciples, and shall be openly acknowledged and rewarded, at the great and last day. It only remains to show.

III. Why the least degree of grace constitutes a real saint.— And here it may be observed,

1. That the least degree of grace implies supreme love to God and the divine Redeemer.— This is more than intimated in the text. "He that is not against us, is on our part." Grace, we have observed, consists in holiness or true benevolence.— True benevolence is universal and disinterested love. And this love gives God and Christ the supreme place in the heart. The least degree of true love or real grace places God on the throne, and rejoices in his absolute sovereignty. Hence Christ in describing true love to himself, represents it as absolutely and necessarily supreme. "Whosoever shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven." He goes on to say, that his true disciples must love him not only more

than the applause of the world, but, more than the friendship of their nearest and dearest connections. "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me : and he that loveth son or daughter more than me, is not worthy of me!" and he carries the idea higher still, "He that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me." He advances a step further and says, that men must love him more than their own lives "He that findeth his life shall lose it, and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it." And in another place he says, "He that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple." When he interrogated Peter respecting the sincerity of his love, he asks, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these." If there can be no true love to any divine person, which is not supreme, then, there can be no true love to God, or Christ, which is not supreme.— And Christ represents it to be really absurd to suppose, that any man can be a true friend and servant to God, without supreme affection to him. "No man can serve two masters : for either he will hate the one, and love the other : or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other.— Ye cannot serve God and mammon." And the apostle John teaches the same doctrine. "Love not the world, neither the things of world. If any man love the world, the love of the Fa-

ther is not in him." It is a plain truth, that the least degree of true love to God implies supreme attachment to him, to his Son, to his Spirit, and to his cause. And such supreme love ought to form a man's character and constitute him a real saint, and distinguish him from every one that has not the love of God in him.

2. The least degree of grace will naturally branch out into every christian affection and moral virtue. The least degree of grace is supreme love to God, and disinterested love to man. The least degree of supreme love to God, will produce repentance, godly sorrow, faith in Christ, unconditional submission to the divine government, humility, meekness, compassion, and a proper regard to the good of men. Love is the fulfilling of the law; the bond of perfection, and the charity, which seeketh not her own.— This holy affection naturally leads those who possess it, to feel and act properly towards every being, creature and object that comes into their view; and so to form a perfect character in miniature.— While pure, holy, disinterested and universal love reigns in the heart, it will dispose every one to feel and act as he ought to feel and act, or as a real saint does feel and act. When the heart of a sinner is changed from sin to holiness, from selfishness to benevolence, he becomes a new man; old things pass away, and all things become new. He becomes a real

saint, instead of a real sinner.— The first and least exercise of grace lays a foundation for every christian grace and virtue.

3. The least degree of grace will produce universal obedience to the divine commands. Grace is love, and that love, which is the fulfilling of the law. The child that has true love to his parents, will obey them; the servant that has true love to his master, will obey him; so whosoever loves God will obey him. Hence says the apostle, "This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments." Those who have the least degree of true love to God, will have respect to all his precepts, and obey them as universally, though not so constantly, as those who are strong in faith. They will perform the most difficult and self-denying duties of the gospel. They will deny themselves—take up their cross—confess Christ before the world; give up their worldly interests and dearest friends; and even sacrifice their lives, to promote the honor and interest of Christ. All this Christ requires of every one of his sincere followers, whether, he has larger, or smaller degrees of grace. He acknowledges none to be his friend, unless he is willing to do whatsoever he commands him. He that is not against Christ, is on his part; and he that is on his part will sincerely desire to do every thing he can, to honor and please him. The least christian

as sincerely desires to obey and please Christ in all things, as the greatest and best disciple he has. Every sincere follower of Christ desires to obey every one of his commands, though he does not constantly obey any one of them. The least degree of grace, therefore, forms the character of a real christian, and prepares him to pay universal obedience to whatever Christ has commanded him. I may add,

4. That the least degree of grace is infallibly connected with persevering and increasing holiness of heart and life. So our Saviour has assured us, in the parable of the sower. "So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself, first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Such is the growing and fruitful nature of divine grace in the heart which Christ further illustrates by saying, "He that received seed into good ground, is he that heareth the word of God and understandeth it; who also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixty, some thirty." He said the same thing in substance to the woman of Samaria. "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never

thirst; but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The reason of this persevering and fruitful nature of grace the apostle gives us in his address to the Philippians, "Being confident of this very thing, that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it, until the day of Jesus Christ."—This he represents as the fixed purpose of God in his epistle to the Romans, "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." According to the divine constitution, there is an infallible connection between the first and lowest degree of grace, and perfect and persevering holiness. It is as certain, that the weakest christian shall persevere, as the strongest, and as certain, that the weakest as well as the strongest, shall become perfectly holy.—Hence there appears good reason, why the least degree of grace should constitute and denominate a real saint, and place him among the friends of God and heirs of heaven.

IMPROVEMENT.

1. If the least degree of grace constitutes a real saint; then every sinner is totally depraved.—It is universally believed and generally allowed, that sinners are in some measure, and in some respects, depraved. Some suppose,

that their reason, conscience, and all their intellectual faculties are in some measure, though not totally weakened, obscured, or depraved. Some suppose, that their depravity lies in their hearts, which are not perfectly holy, nor perfectly destitute of all moral goodness. But it appears from what has been said, that neither of these opinions is just. Depravity lies in the heart, and not in the understanding; and the heart is not only partially, but totally depraved. This appears very plain from numerous declarations of scripture upon the subject. But all scriptural declarations are capable of being misunderstood, misconstrued, and criticised away. There is no doctrine of the gospel, which has been more opposed of late, than the total depravity of sinners, and none which its learned enemies have employed more ingenuity and criticism, to refute. But though they have said some things plausibly to pervert and misconstrue particular passages of scripture, that, in their plain and true sense, support the doctrine of total depravity; yet they have not presumed to deny or explain away that essential distinction between saints and sinners, which runs through the bible, and which has been clearly and abundantly proved in this discourse; and so long as it remains an acknowledged truth, that the least degree of grace constitutes a real saint and forms the only essential difference between him, and every unrenew-

ed sinner, it is in vain for any one to deny or attempt to disprove the doctrine of total depravity. If the least degree of grace constitutes a saint, it irresistibly follows, that every one who is destitute of the least degree of grace, is a sinner. This single argument, instead of a thousand, completely demonstrates, that sinners are totally depraved. It is strange, that those who deny total depravity, have not met and refuted this argument, if they could; for they must have known, that if they refuted this argument, they would have refuted all arguments in favour of total depravity, and established their whole scheme of Arminianism. No other reason can be assigned, why they have declined looking this argument in the face, but a consciousness of its being unanswerable. And so long as this argument remains in unanswerable force, Calvinists have a right to maintain and believe, that sinners are dead in trespasses and sins, that they have not the love of God in them, their hearts are fully set in them to do evil, that they are not on the part of Christ, but against him; and that they are enemies to all righteousness, and totally unfit for the kingdom of heaven.

2. If the least degree of grace forms the character of a real saint; then those who deny total depravity, cannot draw the peculiar character of a real saint, in distinction from a sinner. Those who deny total depravity do not and cannot

decently deny, that the inspired writers continually speak of two sorts of men whom they distinguish by very opposite appellations, calling some righteous and some unrighteous; some godly and some ungodly; some believers and some unbelievers; some friends and some enemies of God; some holy and some unholy; and some saints and some sinners. Accordingly, they make a free and familiar use of these scriptural appellations, in writing and preaching on religious subjects; but they seldom undertake to describe these two classes of men, and to point out any internal and essential distinction between them. They can very easily say, that some are better than others, or that some are not so bad as others, in their external conduct.— But this is nothing more than they can truly say of sinners; for some of them are better, and some are worse than others. So long, therefore, as they maintain, that all men have, by nature some moral goodness, they cannot distinguish a saint from a sinner, for they cannot tell how much goodness a man must have to become a saint. If they say, as they sometimes do, that a man must have more holiness, than sin; or that he must do more good, than evil, in order to become a saint; they cannot tell how many holy exercises he must have to outweigh his sinful exercises, or how many good deeds he must do, to outweigh his evil ones. The truth is, one unholy exercise outweighs all the holy exercises that a man ever had or can have; and one evil action outweighs all the good actions that a man ever did, or can do. One unholy exercise of Adam outweighed all the holy exercises he ever had, or will have; and one act of disobedience outweighed all the obedience he ever had paid, or will pay to God. This is true of Adam and of all his posterity, or else there was no need of an atonement, in order to God's saving him, or us. The notion, that the holiness of men can overbalance their sinfulness, is not only unscriptural, but absurd. It counteracts the very nature of things. There is no way possible for those, who deny total depravity, to draw the essential character of a saint, in distinction from that of a sinner. According to their notion and description of a sinner, he is a real saint, for he has a lower, if not a higher degree of grace and it appears from what has been said, that the lowest degree of grace forms an essential distinction between a saint and a sinner. It is easy to keep this essential distinction out of sight in both writing and preaching, and when it is kept out of sight, it cannot be known whether the writer or preacher is a Calvinist, or an Arminian. It has become very common at this day, for writers and preachers to keep this distinction out of sight, either because they do not believe it, or because they know that the doctrine of total depravity is very of-

fensive to those who are totally depraved, and think better of themselves than they ought to think.

3. If the smallest degree of grace constitutes a real saint; then regeneration is not a gradual, but an instantaneous change. Many who deny total depravity, profess to maintain the doctrine of regeneration. This is true of the Methodists. They talk and preach a great deal about regeneration and a change of heart. But it is very difficult to see their consistency. For if men are not totally depraved, and have real goodness at heart, it is hard to see what need they have of a radical change of heart. Upon their principle, all that sinners need, to prepare them for heaven, is sanctification or growth of grace, or to have their good affections awakened, enlivened, or strengthened. Accordingly, it appears to be the great object of their preachers to awaken their hearers out of stupidity, enkindle their affections, and raise their hopes of future and eternal happiness. And when they have raised their selfish affections to a high degree of joy and rejoicing in God, for his love to them, they view them as subjects of special, regenerating grace: and at the same time, suppose they may fall from this special grace. In this, indeed, they are very consistent. For their converts are only way side, stony ground hearers, whose affections have not been changed from selfishness to pure, holy, disinterested

love. Of course, they may, and must fall away. There are others, who call themselves Calvinists and profess to believe in total depravity, that nevertheless maintain regeneration to be not an instantaneous but a gradual change. They suppose, that sinners under serious, religious impressions, reform, seek and strive, and grow better and better, until their fears abate, and their hopes increase, and they gradually become reconciled to God, and to the way of salvation through Christ. Many reputed orthodox divines have maintained, that regeneration is a gradual, and not an instantaneous change. But if the least degree of grace constitutes a real saint, regeneration must be an instantaneous change of heart from total depravity to real holiness. There can be no medium between selfishness and benevolence, between loving and hating God, or being on Christ's part and against him. The moment God sheds abroad his love in the heart of a sinner, he becomes a saint; as soon as God gives a new heart, he takes away the stony heart: as soon as he gives an heart of love, an heart of hatred and enmity is slain. The change from natural death to natural life must be instantaneous: and it is equally true, that the passing from spiritual death to spiritual life must be instantaneous. There is a difference between regeneration and what is commonly called conversion, and sanctification, and the only differ-

ence is, that regeneration is produced by the instantaneous act of the divine Spirit, but conversion and sanctification are both produced by repeated acts of the same Divine Agent. In respect to regeneration, he instantaneously produces the exercise of holiness, but in conversion and sanctification, he produces gradually one holy exercise after another, until the believer arrives at sinless perfection.

4. If the least degree of grace constitutes a real saint; then those who are destitute of grace, have clear and infallible evidence, that they are sinners. They have no evidence, that they are saints while they are destitute of grace; and if they have no evidence, that they are saints, they must have full and infallible evidence, that they are sinners. There can be no middle character between a saint and a sinner. Those that are not against Christ, are for him; and those that are not for him are against him. Sinners never have any true, pure, disinterested love to God, nor to Christ, nor to any of their fellow men.— They are constantly and completely under the dominion of selfishness, which governs all their views, desires, designs, and pursuits. They have precisely the same evidence, that they are sinners, that the great enemy of God and man has, that he is a sinner. He knows, that he is a sinner, because he knows, that all the free voluntary exercises of his heart

are selfish. He knows, that when he loves, he loves from selfish motives; when he hates, he hates from selfish motives; and when he acts, he acts from selfish motives. He knows the selfish nature of all his moral exercises, and of course, knows that he is an entirely depraved and sinful creature. And all men, who are destitute of grace, know, that all their moral exercises are selfish; that when they love, they love from selfish motives; that when they hate, they hate from selfish motives; and that when they act, they act from selfish motives. All the exercises of their hearts and all the actions of their lives, give them united and infallible evidence, that they are totally depraved sinners, without the least evidence to the contrary. They have as much evidence as it is possible they should have; that they are not saints, but enemies to God and to all good. Yet, with all this evidence within them and against them, do not many doubt whether they are sinners? Do not some hope they are saints? and do not others really believe they are so? Did not many disbelieve Christ, when he told them they had not the love of God in them? Did not Paul think he was a friend to God, while he was a real enemy to Christ and to all his followers?— Are there not many now, who think they are almost, or altogether christians while they are stout-hearted, and far from righteousness? Nothing but total depravi-

ty can account for such gross and fatal ignorance of sinners. It is because their understanding is darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their hearts.

5. If sinners have not the least degree of grace, then they never do any thing, which is pleasing to God. They live in a constant, uninterrupted course of disobedience to the divine commands. They live and act under the dominion of that carnal mind, which is enmity to God, not subject to his law, and neither indeed can be. Every selfish exercise and action is a transgression of the law of love. Though they have done many external actions, which God has required, yet they have never done them because they were right, nor because God required them, but merely because they supposed it was for their interest to do them. They have done every thing to please themselves, and not God, who views all their supposed obedience, as disobedience to his holy law. What sinner ever lived a more obedient and blameless life than Paul did, while he had not the least degree of grace? and how did he view and condemn his obedient and blameless life, after he possessed the grace of God in truth? As graceless sinners always act from their hearts, which are totally depraved; so all their actions, which flow from their corrupt hearts are totally corrupt, criminal, and displeasing to God.

No sinner ever did a single duty, and never will so long as he remains graceless. This God has plainly told sinners in his word; and this they will see and feel to be true, whenever their conscience shall be awakened to see the plague of their natural hearts.— When the commandment comes, which they have broken, it will condemn them for all their internal exercises, and external actions. Many sinners imagine they do almost as many duties as good men do, and do them almost as well; but the solemn truth is; that all they call duties are transgressions of the law of love, for which they deserve to be finally condemned and destroyed, and for which they must condemn themselves, if they are ever saved.

6. If the least degree of grace constitutes a saint; then the least saint has all the marks of vital piety. The least degree of grace implies a radical change of heart. The least saint has a new and holy heart, which will produce every species of holy affections; such as supreme love to God, real repentance of sin, a cordial faith in Christ, and unreserved submission to the divine government, a firm trust in divine promises and a sincere desire to do honor to Christ and promote the interest of his kingdom. And as a new heart will produce every species of holy affections, so it will produce obedience to all the commands of Christ, and especially to his dying command. The man who has the

least degree of grace, is a *new* creature, or a *new* man, who will walk in *newness* of life. The least saint has all the marks of a real saint. Though some men differ in their size, and figure, and countenance from others; yet they have all the essential properties of men. So the least saint has all the properties of the greatest saint, though they may be blended with greater degrees of moral imperfection, or inconstancy in duty. The gospel gives the same marks of piety in the least, as in the greatest christians. Christian graces do not exist alone. Where there is one grace, there is every grace. Where there is true love to God, there is true repentance, true faith, true submission, and true obedience to every precept and prohibition. When a man examines himself to know whether he be the subject of special grace, or a saving change, he must inquire not only whether he has one grace, but every grace; not only whether he loves God, but whether he loves Christ; not only whether he hates one sin, but whether he hates every sin; not only whether he obeys one command, but whether he obeys every command; not only whether he loves his friends, but whether he loves his enemies. Every subject of special grace, does actually exercise every holy affection, and desires to perform every christian duty; and indeed he performs his duty, even in neglecting to do what

is duty, because he verily think it is not his duty. If any person finds upon inquiry, that he lacks this, that, or the other christian grace, he has reason to draw the affecting consequence, that he has not the least degree of grace, but is a sinner dead in trespasses and sins,

7. If the least degree of grace constitutes a saint; then the world have reason to expect that the least christian should exhibit the marks of a real christian. The man, who appears to be the least of sinners, may appear destitute of every mark of a real christian.—The world have no right to expect that every professor should appear an eminent christian; but they have a right to expect that every professor should give evidence of being a real christian, who is a friend to Christ, is on his part, obeys his commands, and seeks to promote his interests in preference to his own. The world know how well sinners may act; but they are not very apt to call them christians, when they do nothing more than what they know is consistent with an unrenewed heart. They expect that every christian should exhibit the scripture marks of a christian; and discovers not only one, but every christian grace. If real christians would give evidence to the world that they are so, let them be uniform and persevering in exercising all the christian graces. This will carry conviction, that

they are the sincere friends of Christ, and are for him, and not against him.

Finally, let sinners realize the dreadful consequences of being destitute of the least degree of grace. So long as they live destitute of grace, they live in continual disobedience to God, and pursue the path which leads to death, and to an eternal separation from all holy and happy beings, and an everlasting and aggravated punishment in a future state. "There is saith my God, no peace for the wicked."

A LETTER TO A FRIEND.

To the Editors of the Christian Magazine.

The following relation was originally written in a letter to a friend. The writer had been for some years a professor of religion and had made a high profession. She was, at the time to which the following letter has reference, the subject of pungent conviction, which conviction resulted in new and very different views of divine truth. I may add that this letter was written nearly twenty years ago, and without any expectations of its ever being made public. If in your judgment it is fitted to produce conviction in the minds of others in similar circumstances, you are requested to allow its insertion in your valuable magazine.

Dear Friend,

I used to think, that I received the bible as a revelation from God;

but scripture and experience convince me, I did not. When I read "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. They hated me without a cause. We will not have this man to reign over us," I thought these and similar passages had reference only to the Jews. But as Nathan said to David, "thou art the man," so I think I have felt this to be my own character, far more forcibly than I ever realized any thing to be mine of a temporal nature. The bible, the Spirit and my own conscience told me, I was the very fool which said in his heart, "There is no God." Christ has been as much a stumbling block to me, as he ever was to the Jews.—When with you I had some religious notions; but how the believer is in Christ, and Christ in the believer, was to me a mystery.—O, how ignorant have I been of my own deformity, and of the purity and extent of the divine law! when I call to mind my former state and how right my way seemed unto me, I feel like a bird that has but just escaped from the snare of the fowler. I trust that I now know, what it is to be lost, that I may be found; to be blind, that I may see; and to be a fool, that I may become wise. It grieves me, when I reflect that my conduct in many respects has been contrary to the gospel.—Alas, I was wise in my own conceit and prudent in my own sight; no wonder therefore, I shewed myself to be a fool.

My late impressions were at first very distressing and very perplexing to me. When the commandment came home to my own case, it revived sin in me and brought to light the hidden works of darkness. When reading the character of man, as hating God and despising the pleasant land, it seemed as though my heart lay on the bible before me; yet I could not endure the thought of becoming a fool in my own eyes, and to give up my own righteousness was like separating the soul from the body. But when it pleased God, of his mere mercy, to shew me his glory, my whole heart turned as with a natural abhorrence from what I had esteemed my own righteousness; if it had been even lawful to take praise to myself I could not; my heart would have spurned at the idea. I have now, my dear friend, poured out my whole heart, I hope I have not done it in the spirit of boasting: for, though to my own shame I have loved the praise of men, more than the praise of God, now it appears to me a small matter, that I should be judged according to man's judgment—to God I stand or fall. Yours, &c.

B. F.

For the Christian Magazine.

ON THE INFLUENCE OF RIGHT AFFECTIONS IN OUR RELIGIOUS INQUIRIES.

On a certain occasion, when the Jews were assembled together to observe the feast of tabernacles, "about the midst of the feast, Je-

sus went up into the temple and taught." The Jews were surprised and offended, that one who had been brought up in an obscure village of Judea and had no distinguished advantage for education, should attempt to instruct the doctors of their supposed wise and learned nation. He however, informed them, that his instructions were not his own, but were such as he had been commissioned to deliver from him, who sent him. He also informed them, that the preparation of mind for understanding his doctrines, does not consist in natural quickness and vigor of understanding; but in a sincere desire to know and do the will of God. "If any man," said he, "will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

To illustrate the influence of a sincere desire to know and do the will of God, upon a person in his inquiries after religious truth, is my leading design in the following remarks.

Such a desire, influences the person, by whom it is possessed, to use the proper and appointed means for discovering religious truth. God has established an intimate connexion between using certain appointed means and obtaining a correct knowledge of religious truth. So intimate is this connexion, that no person can expect to obtain such knowledge, without using the divinely appointed means. And the person

who is the subject of a sincere desire to know and do the will of God, will be thereby influenced, in his inquiries after religious truth, to use all those means, which God has appointed for that purpose.—The making use of these means will be the natural effect of such a desire. It will influence him diligently to read and study the Holy Scriptures. They contain the will of God as revealed to man. They are full of instruction upon the most interesting and important subjects. By them the will of God is clearly and fully made known. They do, indeed contain all that religious truth, which it is important for us to know in the present world. Does a person, then sincerely desire to know and do the will of God?—He will thereby be naturally influenced to read and study that volume in which the divine will is so clearly revealed. It will be his meditation, day and night.—He will, moreover, be influenced by such desire reverently and constantly to attend upon the instructions of the sanctuary. God has set apart an order of men, whose chief business is to inculcate religious truth. Such were the prophets under the former, and the apostles, under the latter dispensation. Such too are all faithful ministers of the gospel at the present time. It is reasonably expected of ministers of the gospel, that they will so familiarly acquaint themselves with the whole system of religious truth, as to be

able to instruct others who have not the same opportunity for reading and study. God has, also, set apart one day in seven, to be employed in worshipping him in the sanctuary, and in attending upon the ministrations of his servants, the preachers of the gospel.—There can, therefore be no doubt that the person, who is the subject of a sincere desire to know and do the will of God, will be thereby influenced, reverently and constantly to attend upon the instructions of the sanctuary. He will regard such attendance as one means, which God has appointed for obtaining a correct knowledge of religious truth.

Influenced by a sincere desire to know and to do the will of God, a person is guarded, in his inquiries after truth, against the influence of many things, which tend to prevent its discovery.

No person, who seriously considers the multitude of conflicting opinions upon the subject of religion, which are embraced at the present day, can doubt that the religious world is full of error.—How shall we account for the existence of this fact? That men, with the inspired volume in their hands, and professing a desire to discover and embrace the truth, do draw, from that volume entirely opposite conclusions, and do embrace radically different doctrines, is certainly a fact worthy our most serious attention. The existence of this fact cannot certainly be ascribed to the bible

itself. To suppose, that it is deficient in any respect, would be an impeachment of its divine author. If it is what it claims to be—a revelation from God—it must not only be free from all absurdity and contradiction, but must speak clearly and decisively upon all religious subjects, concerning which it is necessary and important for men to have information. The fact under consideration cannot, then, be ascribed to a want of clearness in the inspired volume. The true cause of that diversity of religious opinion which now prevails in the christian world, must, therefore, be sought in something pertaining to men.—The fault is most certainly, within themselves. Many are not influenced by so sincere a desire to know and do the will of God as they fondly imagine. Prejudices of various kinds blind their minds, and prevent them from discovering the truth. The learned are often prevented from discovering the truth upon the subject of religion, by pride of genius and learning.—By such, an improper stress is laid upon the strength of the powers and faculties of the human mind.—Reason is exalted above revelation, and is thus made to assume a province for which it was never designed. To the decisions of what many are pleased to call enlightened reason, every religious sentiment must be brought and tried. Every religious sentiment, which, in some respects, is above, not to say contrary to reason,

must be rejected, as the idle dream of some superstitious bigot or whimsical enthusiast. Whatever the bible says, which does not accord with the preconceptions of reason, must be tortured to make it inculcate a different sentiment, from that, which it seems naturally to inculcate—and one which is more pleasing to the inclinations of the natural heart.—Hence the fact that “not many wise men after the flesh, nor many mighty, nor many noble are called,” seems naturally to be accounted for by that pride of intellect, or genius, and of learning, which the wise or learned men of the world are so much accustomed to indulge. This too may serve as an answer to the inquiry, why so many of the most learned men of this and other nations have been found in the ranks of infidelity. What was falsely said of an apostle, may be truly said of many learned and philosophical men, that “much learning makes them mad.” They are too proud of their learning to be willing to sit at the feet of the poor, despised Nazarene, and learn of him.

Men are often prevented from embracing religious truth by the influence of self love. Any sentiment which is not accordant with this main spring of affection and action in the unrenewed heart, is believed with reluctance, if not rejected with disdain. To him, who is wrapped up in self-love, the bible afford no pleasure. It tells him many painful truths.—

It gives him a description of his own heart, which, if correct, proves him to be in the gall of bitterness, and under bonds of iniquity: to be, indeed, an enemy of God, under sentence of condemnation for his transgressions of the divine law. Such a description he cannot, therefore willingly believe to be correct. He loves to indulge his selfish desires, and wishes to indulge them without disturbance or control. But this he knows he cannot do, if he suffers himself, for one moment, to believe, that his heart is as depraved, and his condition as alarming, as the Bible represents them to be. Such a belief, he is sensible, would disturb him in the midst of his carnal joys, and make him wretched indeed. But he can, by no means, consent to be thus disturbed. Hence, he concludes, either that the Bible is a cunningly devised fable, or determines to make it speak a different language from that which it most naturally seems to speak.-- Persons, are, again often prevented from embracing and professing the truth by worldly hopes and fears. Their understandings are, perhaps, convinced of the truth of christianity or of some of its peculiarly unpopular doctrines. But from making known their convictions they are prevented by some worldly hopes or fears.-- They perhaps, hold offices of honor and profit in church and state. In these offices they hope to continue for many years. This hope they imagine, will be disappoint-

ed, unless they persist in professing an attachment to the same religious sentiments, which they have hitherto professed to embrace. They fear, if they make it known, that their religious sentiments are different from what they once were, they shall lose the favor and patronage of a certain class of men, whom they wish to please; and thus shall suffer essential injury in regard to their worldly reputation and interest.

But against the influence of these, and similar prejudices, hopes, and fears, the person, who in his inquiries after religion, is actuated by a sincere desire to know and do the will of God, is, in a good degree, guarded. His desire to know and do the divine will is a holy desire, flowing from a heart renewed by grace and warmed by love to God. To him, who possesses such a heart, the discovery and knowledge of religious truth appear to be of vast importance. He wishes to know what the truth is, not only, that he may thus ascertain the divine will, but also on account of the intrinsic excellence of the truth itself. His heart is prepared to receive and embrace, and love the truth, whenever and wherever, and by whomsoever discovered.-- Against the clear light of divine truth, prejudice does not blind and close his mental eyes. To the positive declarations of the Bible, he does not, through pride of genius and of learning, oppose the decisions of unsanctified reason;

but possessing an humble, child-like disposition, he delights to sit at the feet of Jesus, and from his lips to hear the words of divine truth. Nor is he blinded by self-love against the light of truth.— His unholy, selfish desires have, in a measure, been subdued by the Holy Spirit. He is not therefore, afraid, that the truth will disturb his happiness and make him wretched. Besides, he wishes to know the worst of his case. He does not wish to be deceived upon so momentous, and all-interesting a subject as that of his own character and standing in the sight of God. He wishes to have his own character fully exhibited to his view, and ardently desires, that this may be done without delay. Nor is he prevented from embracing and professing the truth by worldly hopes and fears. He fears God rather than man. He loves God, and, therefore, wishes to please him. He fears his holy displeasure and indignation, and therefore, does not act the hypocritical part of secretly believing the truth, and, yet, of denying it before men. He chooses to be hated and ridiculed by men, and to be disappointed in regard to his dearest earthly hopes, rather than to forfeit the approbation of God. He is, therefore, guarded, in his inquiries after religious truth against the influence of many things, which often prevent men from discovering and embracing it. A sincere desire to

know and do the will of God influences a person, in his inquiries after religious truth, to ask the teaching of the Holy Spirit. Such a person is afraid of being deceived. Though he is, in a good degree, guarded against the influence of prejudice, self-love, worldly hopes and fears, and other things, which tend to blind the mind, and prevent the discovery of religious truth. Yet against the influence of these he does not view himself as completely guarded. He knows, that his heart is naturally deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; and by it he is still afraid he shall be deceived. Upon his mind, he is sensible, early impressions and associations may still have an undue influence, and may lead him astray from the path of truth into the path of error, before he is aware. Yet he dreads, most of all things deception upon this subject. From being deceived, he knows he can be effectually secured by nothing but divine teaching. Instead, therefore, of depending upon the energies of his own mind to enable him to discover the truth, he considers them as but comparative weakness, and beseeches God to grant him the gracious aid of his Spirit to enlighten his understanding, and to lead him into all truth. Such being the sincere desire to know and do the will of God upon a person in his inquiries after religious truth, well did our Savior say, "If any man

will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."

F.

From the Utica Repository.

THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY—BY BUNYANUS.

CHAPTER. II.

Then I turned my attention another way, and observed two young men walking aside by themselves, whose countenances showed that the discourse of Evangelist had made a deep impression upon their minds. The name of the one was Sensitive, and that of the other, Sincere. Both appeared to be filled with deep distress, and the tears flowed copiously from the eyes of Sensitive.

Oh, said Sensitive, what shall I do? The wrath of the king is revealed against us. How stupid have I been, that I did not think of it before.

And I, said Sincere, begin to think, that we do, indeed, hang over a dreadful pit, which will, sooner or later, swallow up our city, and all that inhabit it.

Oh, said Sensitive, I will never more be so stupid. I will go to our minister and inquire what I shall do to escape the wrath to come.

And I, said Sincere, will go and settle my affairs, and prepare to leave the city.

Then I observed that there were a number of churches in the

city of Destruction, whose pulpits were supplied by ministers, who were had in very high esteem and who were very popular in the city; such as Doctor Smoothman, Doctor Soothing, Mr. Slight-heal, Mr. Save-all, and several others. Sensitive belonged to the parish of Doctor Smoothman, with whom he was well acquainted, and going directly to his house, desired to speak with him. So the Doctor took him into his study, and after bidding him to be seated, inquired what he wanted. At which Sensitive burst into tears, and was so overcome that he could not speak. Then said Doctor Smoothman, compose yourself, young man, and tell me what is the matter.

Sensitive. Oh, sir, I fear I am undone forever.

Dr. Smoothman. Undone forever! Why, what has happened to you?

Sen. I am a sinner, sir, and I fear I shall fall into the burning pit. I fear that the king is very angry with me.

Dr. Sm. If that is all, you may quiet your fears. We are all sinners; but the king is very merciful.

Sen. But I have heard, sir, that the king is angry with the wicked every day.

Dr. Sm. That is, with those who are very wicked, as swearers, thieves, drunkards, adulterers, and the like. But you are not guilty of any of these sins.—I have been acquainted with you

from a child, and have always known you to be a modest, sober youth, and never addicted to any disreputable practices.

Sen. But I have heard that the law of the king requires us to love him with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves; and this without any interruption, upon pain of his eternal displeasure; which I fear I have not done.

Dr. Sm. That was the law given to man before the fall. The king then required perfect obedience, upon pain of his eternal displeasure. But since we have become fallen, imperfect creatures, he has placed us under a milder law, better suited to our circumstances. If we lead a sober, regular life, go constantly to church, are honest in our dealings, kind to the poor, and do not fall into any violent, out-breaking sins, we have no reason to fear but that he will accept us. It is true that we may be guilty of some little sins, some venial ones, (as who is there, that is without some?) but the king knows that these are infirmities which are incident to our fallen nature; and as our good deeds so far overbalance these, the king will certainly bestow upon us a rich reward.

Sen. You give me great comfort, sir. I thank you for your wholesome instruction, and shall endeavor to profit by it. But I feel that my fears have very much disturbed my mind; what shall I do to regain that composure which I have lost?

Dr. Sm. I perceive that you are somewhat discomposed; and I would advise you to banish all such thoughts as occasioned your late distress, and avoid every thing which is likely to suggest them. Endeavor to divert your mind.— For if you dwell on these gloomy subjects, you will be in danger of falling into a settled melancholy, and perhaps derangement of mind, which would be a dreadful calamity. Resort to some harmless amusement. Frequent the company of your young friends. Take an innocent hand at cards, or engage in the sprightly dance, or go to the theatre. And when you cannot avail yourself of these, read some diverting book, such as a novel or a play, to prevent the recurrence of gloomy thoughts. These means are admirably calculated to prevent, or remove such distress of mind as yours.— And if these things will not afford you relief, and restore your former tranquility, I know not what will.

Sen. I feel greatly obliged to you, sir, for your kind instruction and advice. I have always been particularly fond of these innocent amusements, as most of the young people in our city are. I feel my mind greatly relieved already; and hope that by attending to your directions, I shall soon regain my wonted tranquility and cheerfulness.

Then I saw that Sensitive took his leave with a cheerful air, and returned to his house, well satisfied.

with himself, and with his minister, and no longer entertained any thoughts of leaving the city.

After this, I turned to see what was become of the other young man who had been alarmed at the preaching of Evangelist. And I soon perceived that he had reached his house, and was retired to his room, to reflect upon his present circumstances, and the great danger to which he was exposed. I had observed that he did not appear to be so much moved, at first, as Sensitive had been; but I now saw that what he had heard had taken a strong hold of his mind, and that he was walking his room, absorbed in deep thought. Upon this, one named Conscience came in, and addressed him with a stern air.

Con. All that Evangelist said concerning you is true.

Sincere. I know it is, and I have no longer any doubt that our city will, sooner or later, be destroyed and that if I remain in it, I shall perish in its ruins.

Con. I have often told you the same things; and have often reproved you for your stupid and careless life.

Sin. You have, indeed; but I have slighted your admonitions, and have been unwilling to listen to your voice.

Con. You have so; and you deserve now to perish with the city. Look back also on your past life. Consider how many acts of rebellion against the king you have committed; and that, too,

when I have remonstrated against your conduct, in the most decided terms. Consider how many times you have promised to amend your life, and have broken your promises; how often you have resolved to go on pilgrimage, and have acted contrary to those resolutions.

Sin. All that you say is true. I am, indeed, in great danger. What shall I do? I fear the king will not accept me now, although I should leave the city, and go on pilgrimage. If I remain here, I shall perish; if I leave the city, I shall perish. Ah me! who can endure the wrath of the king?—Oh that I had never been born.

Con. Remember, also, how foolishly you have spent your time; how many precious moments you have wasted in vain and criminal amusements; how often you have drunk deep of the streams of sensual pleasure, not only contrary to my advice, but on purpose to get rid of my unwelcome company.

Sin. Oh the precious moments that I have murdered! The recollection of each plants a dagger in my bosom. What a fool have I been, to trifle, as I have done, upon the brink of eternal burnings! I cannot bear to hold my finger in the candle for one minute; how then can I bear the torments of the pit, through the countless ages of eternity! Oh! that word—*Eternity!* How it rings in my ears! Could I hope that the torments of the pit would ever have an end, the anticipa-

tion of them would be less intolerable! But who can dwell with the devouring fire? Who can inhabit everlasting burnings?

Then I saw that Sincere was in great agony of mind; and although he threw himself upon his bed, he found no rest, but spent the night in meditating terror, and looking frequently for the pit to open beneath him; and swallow him up. And if he fell into a momentary slumber, he would presently start, and scream as if the fiends of the pit were already seizing him for their prey. In the morning he rose, and attempted to attend to some business; but his mind was so disturbed with the thoughts of his present situation, that he found it impossible. In the afternoon, he resolved to go to his minister, Doctor Soothing, (for he belonged to his parish) and obtain his instructions and directions about setting out on pilgrimage, as he was determined to set out without any more delay.—Accordingly he went to the house of Doctor Soothing, who received him with great kindness, and inquired in the tenderest manner what was the cause of his distress.

Sincere. It is the fear, sir, of the wrath of the King, that makes me tremble. I see myself exposed to fall into the burning pit; while I remain in this city. And I fear it is too late for me to escape. Do, sir, tell me if there is any hope that I may yet escape from the wrath to come.

Doct. Soothing. There is every ground of hope that can be wished. If the king has given you a desire to escape, it is an evidence that he intends to gratify that desire. It gives me sincere pleasure to see you thus anxious for your safety, because I consider it an indication that the king has designs of mercy towards you. It is

the king himself that has given you this view of your danger, and excited these desires to escape it; and where the king has begun a good work in any, he will carry it on.

Sin. But I have heard that it is necessary for me to repent of my sins, to enter in at the wicket gate, and go on pilgrimage; and I fear I have not that repentance which is unto life.

Doct. S. Do you not desire to repent? And are you not greatly distressed to think of the folly and wickedness of your past life?

Sin. I am, indeed, greatly distressed, to think that I have, by my own folly and wickedness, exposed myself to the wrath of the King; and I think I do sincerely desire to have that repentance which is necessary to my being delivered from the punishment to which I am exposed.

Dr. S. "He that desires to repent does it already in some measure." And it must needs be very pleasing to the King to see you thus distressed, and grieving that you have offended him.

Sin. Your words are full of consolation, sir. And I think myself happy in having the privilege of your instructions. But I understand sir, that I must leave the city, and go on pilgrimage, if I would secure the favor of the King.

Dr. S. You must ultimately leave the city, and go on pilgrimage; but you cannot go yet. You must wait the King's time. No one can enter the gate which is at the head of the way, by an act of his own. The King must send a messenger to carry you through the gate. You must wait, therefore, the good pleasure of the King. All that you can do is, to reform your life, to use the means of obtaining the King's favor, and to remain in the city until he shall

see fit to send his messenger to carry you through the gate. But if you faithfully persevere in the use of means, and in this way do what you can, antecedently to passing the gate, there is no fear but that the King will accomplish all the rest.

Sin. What are the means which I must use to obtain the King's favor?

Dr. S. You must pray to him, go constantly to church, read good books, and lead a strictly moral life.

Sin. Is it certain, that if I use these means, I shall obtain his favor?

Dr. S. Yes for he said, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Then I observed that Sincere appeared to be greatly relieved from his distress; and though his countenance still had the appearance of deep thoughtfulness, it was evident that the conversation of Dr. Soothing had kindled a hope, resolved to pursue the course pointed out to him by his minister, and to be very diligent in it, that he might not fail of success.

Upon this, I turned my attention again towards the gate, and saw Evangelist engaged in conversation with a man, whose countenance indicated a sedate, but deeply anxious mind. So I drew near, and listened to their discourse.-- Then said Evangelist to the man, whose name was *Thoughtful*.

Ev. What is the cause of your distress?

Th. I see that I am, indeed, a sinner, and that I am exposed to the wrath of the King.

Ev. You are, no doubt, a greater sinner than you are sensible of and are justly condemned; but this is a faithful saying, and wor-

thy of all acceptation, that the Prince Immanuel came into the world to save sinners. Only comply with the prescribed conditions and you may be delivered.

Th. What are the conditions which I must perform?

Ev. You must cordially justify the King, and condemn yourself. You must remember your own evil ways, and your doings that have not been good, and loathe yourself in your own sight, for your iniquities and for your abominations. You must approve of the method which the king has provided of bestowing pardon upon his rebellious subjects, through the atoning blood of the Prince Immanuel. In short, you must enter the gate, and walk in the narrow way that leads to life.

Th. I am convinced that the King is right, and that his sentence of condemnation upon me is just; for I have done nothing but rebel against him all the days of my life. But I find that it is one thing to be convinced of this in my conscience, and another thing to approve of it in my heart. I find my heart wholly opposed to the King, and to his law and government; and chiefly because he condemns me. If I could only be assured that he intends to show favor to me, I think I could love him; but while he condemns me, I cannot.

Ev. That is you could love a sin-pardoning King, but not a sin-punishing King. And yet, the King will pardon some, and punish others. And he does perfectly right in both; and you ought to love him for doing right.

Th. I know I ought; but I do not; and this is my misery. For if I could only persuade myself that the King is unjust, it would be some support to me. I think I could bear up under the infliction

of an unjust sentence ; but, to be condemned by a just sentence, and to have no excuse, nor palliation of my conduct ; to have no room to complain of the King ; to have my own conscience condemn me ; that is what I cannot bear. Under this, I feel my spirits wholly sink. Oh ! what shall I do ?

Ev. Submit yourself to the King. He has determined to pardon some, for the glory of his grace ; and he has determined to punish others according to their deserts, for the glory of his justice. You know not which he has determined respecting you.-- But you know that his glory is of more importance than your personal interests. Give up yourself into his hands, to be disposed of as he shall see best. Why should you wish the King to sacrifice his glory to secure your personal interests ? His glory is of more importance than the interest of any creature ; and he does right in making it his supreme object : and in disposing of every creature in that way which will best promote it.

Th. I know he does right in preferring his glory to my happiness. I know I deserve to perish forever. I know that I am altogether unreasonable and wicked in preferring my happiness to the glory of the King. Oh ! what a vile creature I am ! How glorious and excellent is the King, even in the execution of his threatenings ! I deserve to be cast off, and if he does cast me off, he will be glorious in it, and I think I can praise him for it. How glorious is his mercy ! how glorious is his justice ! I will praise him for both. I will submit. I will put myself into his hands. "And if he thus say, I have no delight in thee ; behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him."

So saying, I beheld him enter the Wicket Gate, with a composed countenance ; and Goodwill said unto him, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it ; but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." And, observing in his hand a book which Evangelist had given him, he said, "Search the scriptures ; for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." Then, having bid him to call at the house of the Interpreter, where he should be more fully instructed in the King's statutes, he dismissed him to go on his way, saying, "Take heed that no man deceive you."

So he went on his way, still keeping his book in his hand, and sometimes reading therein, and sometimes talking to himself, of the glorious character of the King and of the might of his terrible acts. And presently I heard him sing :

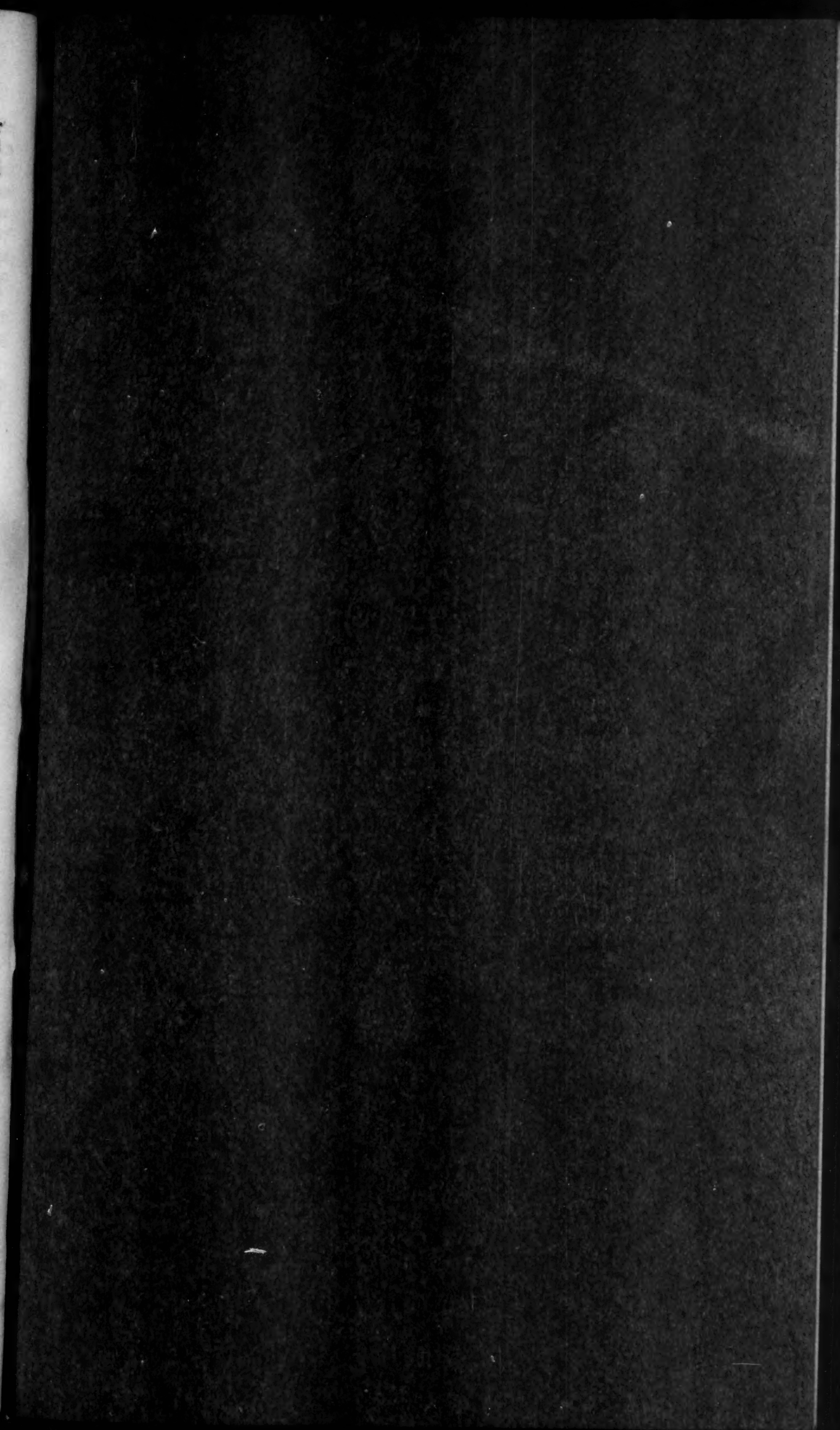
"The Lord is God ; 'tis he alone
Doth life, and breath, and being give ;
We are his works, and not our own ;
The sheep that on his pastures live.

His truth and justice I'll proclaim :
His bounty flows an endless stream :
His mercy swift, his anger slow,
But dreadful to the stubborn foe.

His works with sovereign glory shine,
And speak his majesty divine ;
Let every realm with joy proclaim
The sound and honor of his name."

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